



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to High Commissioner on National Minorities on his visit to Kyrgyzstan

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 6, 2010

The United States is always pleased to welcome you back to the Permanent Council, High Commissioner Vollebaek. We are particularly pleased that you visited Kyrgyzstan at this time. As your remarks indicated, this is truly a pivotal time for Kyrgyzstan, and the OSCE, through its various institutions, which have performed well in responding to this crisis.

As you noted, the concerns in Kyrgyzstan extend beyond those faced by ethnic minorities. And your comments about people losing faith in the political system or losing hope for the future only underscore the urgency with which we must bring all of our combined resources to bear to help ensure democratic governance, protection of human rights, and the rule of law for the people of Kyrgyzstan. It is important that OSCE institutions continue to play a positive role in this fragile process.

The United States shares your concerns about the vulnerable situation of national minorities in Kyrgyzstan. All of us were deeply saddened by the deaths stemming from the recent ethnic violence in Maevka. We call upon all parties to commit to peacefully resolving grievances and to reject violence entirely.

Russians, Turks, Uzbeks, Uighurs, Meskhetians, and more than 90 other minorities contribute to the rich and diverse fabric of Kyrgyzstan's society. All citizens of Kyrgyzstan, regardless of their ethnic or cultural heritage, must be able to rely upon the rule of law and the fair resolution of their disputes. The illegal seizure of lands as we saw in Maevka and other parts of the country is unacceptable.

Your three-point approach makes excellent sense, especially beginning with the need for authorities to ensure the security and human rights of all citizens of Kyrgyzstan, including all members of minority communities. We support your call for government officials to publicly condemn attacks on members of minorities, to investigate these crimes and to bring perpetrators to justice.

Likewise, your additional recommendations to include input from minority individuals in the process of creating a new constitution and designing the new elections code, and to pay careful attention to policies on multilingual education are exceptionally important and valuable.

Finally, we join your concluding message of hope for the future and the people of Kyrgyzstan and recommit ourselves to assisting in the process of securing democracy, security and the rule of law.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.